

PRIORITY: TECHNOLOGY AT DR. HOWARD FULLER COLLEGIATE ACADEMY

Technology Ambassadors bring a "genius bar" and more to Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy

It is critical that scholars and educators have the digital tools and equitable access to the technology they will need to be successful.

Every day we hear stories about how not enough underserved high school students are studying arts, math, science, technology and engineering. More than four years ago, Dr. Howard Fuller Academy (HFCA) decided that it was time to do something about it.

It all started with an idea. In 2016, HFCA needed to bring more technology into the hands of students to support its personalized learning curriculum. Through community and grassroots fundraising, the school raised enough money to strengthen its technology infrastructure and was able to purchase enough affordable laptops for its students.

The twist?

Our scholars would be the backbone of technology support at our high school. The Technology Ambassador program gives students a chance to learn new skills, gain experience in technology, project management and communication. They help ensure our classrooms are connected. Perhaps



even more importantly, the program provides mentoring opportunities and leadership experience to students.

The impact

“Tech Ambassadors profoundly contribute to teaching and learning,” says Principal Judith Parker. “The tremendous experience that Tech Ambassadors are gaining is only a portion of the benefit the school is receiving in comparison.”

The school’s small Technology Department manages nearly 400 Chromebooks, staff devices and classroom technology. What started as an ad hoc seven member student squad in 2016 has quickly grown to a formalized program including over 15 students including six girls across the 10th, 11th and 12th-grades who help support our growing student population.

“The program was born out of necessity,” says Bill Attewell, HFCA’s Technology Director. “We had to be smart about how we would provide technology support with limited resources. For

example, students began repairing broken student laptops saving the school over \$10,000. in replacement costs.”

The teens also manage a virtual help desk to provide Level 1 Tech Support to all students, teachers and staff. This year, they closed over 1,500 support tickets solving problems like connectivity, login issues, software help and other support for classroom technology. This allows teachers to focus on teaching when technology issues arise while teaching..

They have also become creators, proficient in videography and photography capturing classroom learning, school culture and special events with a YouTube channel that boasts more than 6,000 subscribers.

“Being a Tech Ambassador helped prepare me for the future and it set me up to be a leader,” says Demetryus Freeman, who will be entered his junior year at Northland College in the fall of 2020. “The program helped prepare me for college because I learned how to become a better problem solver.”

#WatchNow

The Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy Tech Ambassadors along with other students are the backbone of our school’s video and communications strategy.

Did you know that HFCA’s YouTube Channel has more subscribers than UW-Milwaukee, Alverno College and Marquette University combined?

Just one of our YouTube posts – a self-produced music reaction video – has garnered over 3 million views. Our channel is a unique, fresh window into learning at



Tech Ambassadors interview Wisconsin State Rep. Kalan Haywood.

HFCA, our high school’s students, staff, families and community.